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Nicole Travis '11

Illinois Wesleyan University

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Contact: Nicole Travis '11, (309) 556-3181

Phi Eta Sigma Grants Babawande Afolabi Undergraduate Award

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – The national office of the Phi Eta Sigma Honor Society has selected Illinois Wesleyan University junior Babawande Afolabi as a recipient of its \$1,000 undergraduate award for the 2008-2009 school year. Afolabi, a business and economics double major with a political science minor, was inducted into the Illinois Wesleyan chapter of Phi Eta Sigma during the spring of 2007 and acted as an officer in the society during the 2007-2008 academic year.

Phi Eta Sigma is a national honor society that accepts first-year students who display high scholastic success. This year, its Scholarship Committee reviewed what they estimated to be the highest amount of applicants in the scholarship program's history, which has grown significantly over more than 30 years. In 1970, nine annual awards were granted at a value of \$300 each. In 2008, the society will award a total of \$250,000 to 70 undergraduate and graduate members.

For Afolabi, the award feeds a college career that has spanned activities involving both on-campus and global initiatives. Since arriving in the United States from Nigeria in 2006 to pursue an Illinois Wesleyan education, Afolabi has been active in the IWU Student Senate and was in attendance at the May 2008 International Association for Political Science Students Academic Conference & General Assembly in Greece.

Afolabi's prospects extend beyond his studies, most notably with regards to acquiring aid for his native country. After learning of "microloans," or small loans given to individuals hoping to begin a business, Afolabi felt he had come across a possible solution to his search. Through Sponsors for Educational Opportunity (SEO), which places minority students with some of the nation's top companies, Afolabi earned an investment internship with Morgan Stanley on Wall Street during the summer of 2008. Because SEO's Career Program usually places students in their junior year, that Afolabi participated as one of 48 sophomores was an especially unique opportunity.